Symposium Gender Apartheid and Islam Part 2

By Jamie Glazov
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FP: Mr. El-Mallah?

El-Malla: Mr. Spencer and Mr. Sina have brought up most of the recycled misconceptions about women in Islam.

Mr. Spencer and Mr. Sina failed to understand the logic behind naming the chapters in Qur'an. "The Women" chapter addresses many women topics as well as other topics. The chapter was named "The Women," where it could have been named something else from the other topics discussed. If Islam is looking down to women, the chapter would not have been called "The Women" or at least you would find another chapter called "The Men."

I would like to correct Mr. Sina, the longest chapter in Qur'an is named "The Cow," it is not "Cow." There is a big difference between the two words. The name refers to a specific cow, in a reference to its story that is mentioned in the chapter and the great lessons learned from that story.

Verse 33:35, not only enumerate the responsibilities and rewards of men and women, it clearly proves that there is no superior gender, and the general rules apply on both. Not sure how Mr. Spencer and Mr. Sina define equality? But to me the above verse clearly proves equality, and if Q33:35 is not enough for them, verse 3:135 stresses the same meaning when Allah (swt) says: "Never will I allow to be lost the work of any of you, whether male or female; you are of one another." Q4:124: "And whoever does righteous deeds, whether male or female, while being a believer, those will enter Heaven, and will not be wronged (even as much as) the speck on a date seed" Same is emphasized in Q16:97 and Q40:40.

The verses and Hadiths that Mr. Spencer and Mr. Sina quoted are not obstacles to liberating women, they might seem to them that way, since they have been taken out of context (and in some cases, totally misinterpreted by both, as I will prove inshaaAllah). It is interesting that Mr. Spencer is inquiring why we did not mention the few verses that he brought up, and the more important question is: Why have Mr. Spencer and Mr. Sina ignored much more verses and Hadiths that praise the women, order the men to treat the women in nice, respected, and compassionate manner.

1. Q2:228 "men have a degree (of advantage) over them."

Mr. Spencer and Mr. Sina failed to mention the fact that in Islam the husband is the financially responsible party in the family; the wife is not required to contribute with a penny from her own money. This verse does not mean superiority and it does not mean any advantage before the Islamic law.

Islam emphasizes the importance of taking counsel and mutual agreement in family decisions. Qur'an gives us an example: "If they (husband and his wife) desire to wean the child by mutual consent and (after) consultation, there is no blame on them" (Q 2:233).

Allah (swt) states:" But consort with them in kindness, for if you hate them it may happen that you hate a thing wherein God has placed much good." Q4: l9. Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said: "The best of you is the best to his family and I am the best among you to my family. The most perfect believers are the best in conduct and best of you are those who are best to their wives." (Ibn-Hanbal, No. 7396)

The above mentioned degree is not a privilege but a responsibility, which mandates maintenance and protection and prohibits dictatorship.

2. Q4:11-12 that women inherit half of their male siblings.

This does not mean in anyway that a sister is worth half of her brother. This variation in inheritance shares is only consistent with the variations in financial responsibilities. The husband in Islam is fully responsible for the maintenance of his wife, his children, and in some cases of his needy relatives, especially the females. This responsibility is neither waived nor reduced because of his wife's wealth or because of her access to any personal income gained from work, rent, profit, or any other legal means. A woman's share is completely hers and no one can make any claim on it, including her father, brother or husband, irrespective of how rich she is and how poor her family is. If she, optionally, spends any amount on her family, Allah(swt) will reward her more in the Day of Judgment. She is entitled to a dowry from her husband at the time of marriage. And if a divorce takes place she can get alimony from her ex-husband.

3. Q33:50 that if a women becomes captive in a war, her Muslim master is allowed to rape her.

The cited verse has nothing to do with rape at all, not sure what type of translation or interpretation Mr. Sina is using?

4. Q66:10 that if a woman is not totally submissive to her husband she will enter Hell.

The verse talks about the story of the wives of Noah and Lot (PBUT), and how they did not follow the Prophets's message so they are punished for that. This is clear from the story of Lot (PBUH) and how his wife did not follow the order of Allah(swt).

5. Q2:223 that women are "tilth" for their husbands (to cultivate them).

The Arabic word that Qur'an used is "Harth," which means cultivation of land. In fact Harth is a metonymy for the vulva of women. The similarity between 'tilth' and 'vulva' is that man put his seed in the vulva of women. This seed will grow up till it becomes a child. A similar thing will happen when the farmer put seeds of a plant! Using this metonymy in Arabic language is very common even before the Qur'an was revealed. This verse was revealed because Jews

used to say to Muslims in Medina that if the husband made the intercourse (in the vagina) from the back of the woman, then the child will come cross-eyed. The Holy Qur'an used this beautiful example to tell Muslims that however the seed was put in the 'tilth', the result will be the same.

6. Q4:34 which enjoins wife-beating.

It is important to read the section fully and understand it in the light of other verses and Hadiths. One should not take part of the verse and use it to justify one's own misconduct. The problem with many Islam-bashers is that they keep their eyes away from any Hadith that explains certain aspects of the Quran verses. The verse cited is a clear example of such case. This verse neither permits violence nor condones it. The word "beating" is used in the verse, but it does not mean "physical abuse". The Prophet (PBUH) explained it in Arabic "*dharban ghayra mubarrih,*" which means "a light tap that leaves no mark". He further said that face **must** be avoided. Some and that it is no more than a light touch by *siwak*, or toothbrush. This should not be used in minor household problems. It should be used in severe cases of "**disloyalty and ill-conduct."** This is a last resort after all other means have failed.

The wife has no religious obligation to take the beating. She can ask for and get divorce any time, actually Islam allows the wife to divorce her husband through what is known as "khole'". Mr. Sina statement: "Under the Sharia women are not allowed to divorce even if their husband beats them. The decision to divorce rest only on man's whims" is absolutely wrong.

In Islam, if the husband beats a wife without respecting the limits set down by the Quran and Hadith, then she can take him to court and, if ruled in her favor, she can be given the right to apply the law of retaliation and beat the husband as he beat her.

It will be interesting to see how many other religions have given the wife such rights? Actually, in a fast comparison with the biblical teachings regarding that issue we can see that if a wife entices her husband to worship other than God, then he should stone her to death (Deuteronomy 13:7-12) But I think the mission of some is to bash Islam and Islam only.

7. About the Hadith that majority of its dwellers were women; Mr. Sina presented only half of the fact. Women form not only the majority of the people of Hell, the same authentic sources, also state that women will form the majority of the people of Paradise, see (Sahih Muslim, Kitaab al-Jannah, 4/2179, no. 2834). Simply, summing the number of women through the humanity, they will be the majority. I would have discussed it more, if the Hadith mentioned the number of women entering Hell and the number of women entering Paradise and comparing these numbers (or percentages) to men.
8. About the first Martyr in Islam, the point that Mr. Sina missed, is that from the early time of the Islam till now, women didn't feel that Islam contain within itself the keys to oppress them, otherwise they wouldn't have sacrificed much for it, let alone their lives.

9. Again Mr. Sina goes into a field that he proved that he has a little experience at by claiming that only Ibn Saad narrated the story of the martyrdom of Summayyah. Well, here it is from Al-Bayhaqi " Abu Jahl stabbed her in her private parts." (*Al-Dalaa'il*, 2/282) and then it is supported by Ibn Katheer when he said:" When Abu Jahl was killed on the day of Badr, the Prophet (PBUH) said (to 'Ammaar, her son): 'Allaah has killed the one who killed your mother.'" "(*al-Isaabah*, 4/327; *al-Bidaayah wa'l-Nihaayah* by Ibn Katheer, 3/59).

I have to stress that in this symposium we are discussing "Does Islam Contain in itself...." So when we present arguments they have to discuss actual Islamic teaching. Examples from contemporary countries that are not practicing true Islam are not the main subject of this symposium. But since Mr. Spencer and Mr. Sina gave themselves the right to talk about such issues, I will refute couple of the points they raise, again I cannot cover all points because of the length:

10. "Imagine if all Muslims were to stone or hang victims of rape or flog women for minor offenses such as exposing a flock of hair."

These are not orders of Allah (swt), from where did Mr. Spencer come up with these claims? In Islam Victims of rape are not punished in anyway. They are victims..! Islam orders us to stone both MEN and WOMEN who commit adultery if they are married. If they are not married they are BOTH lashed.

11. Assuming for a second that over nine out of ten Pakistani wives have been abused somehow by their husbands, this does not mean much unless we establish that the sample selected was religiously committed Muslims. Again, many of the Muslim men around the world do not know what Islam order them when it comes to treating their wives. How will they know, if their governments are intentionally removing any meaningful religious education from the public schools.

It will be very interesting to know how many men are been abused by their wives (yelling and shouting are considered to be abuse in the survey mention by Mr. Spencer)? More importantly, let's look at the domestic violence in the USA: Does Mr. Spencer know that by the end of 4 years of college, 88 percent of women had experienced at least one incident of physical or sexual victimization in their lifetimes (US Dept. of Justice research in Nov 04)? And a final important point, to be able to reach to any conclusion from the study mentioned you need to find out what is the similar percentage in a non-Muslim 3rd World country such as India, which is not surprising to me, is very close to the percentage in Pakistan!!! Shall we blame Islam for what the Christian men are doing in the US and the Hindu men in India, let alone Philippine, Chili, etc.?

FP: Ms. Roach?

Roach: I would just like to bring up the point, as obvious as it might be, that I am a Muslim woman, married to a Muslim man, educated, and right at this very moment contradicting the

views of men in a public forum proving that Islam does not oppress women, ignorance does. I agree that there is a very poor rate of implementing real Islamic law which enforces fulfilling the rights of women as much as men's rights. As for criticizing certain countries like Pakistan, there is no excuse for the ignorance practiced by some people there or anywhere concerning female seclusion and abuse. I would also suggest that the critics inspect American rates of spousal abuse, the reality is women are beaten everywhere under every guise imaginable. There is also no excuse for women to receive this kind of treatment and not fight back, if not out of knowledge of the Qur'an and Sunnah, then out of their own human dignity. If I were beaten by anybody, husband or no, you can bet your life I would fight back!

Ok. Islamic law is not set up to imprison people, it is set up to free them, from ignorance. There is nothing anywhere in any of the texts that tells women to take beatings from anyone, and people who use certain hadith to support violence and misogyny will receive their own punishments for adding and subtracting to faith of Islam from the best Judge. I do comfort myself with this, that those who slander Islam unjustly will be punished in this world or the next, as they would be for any lie. Muslims, whether male or female are not allowed to be oppressed, this might clear up my emphasis on female martyrdom and the right to fight and die in Allah's cause (jihad), if you die in refusal of being oppressed you merit the reward of paradise in sha Allah, the goal of all Muslims, therefore there is no excuse for anyone male or female to take this kind of treatment from anyone! There is no real Islamic society today on the national level, there is no real and complete implementation of Sharia law, therefore how can anyone criticize Sharia law! When they themselves have not even seen it enacted as it is supposed to be?

I will reiterate my first point: condemning Islam because of some people's backward interpretation is unscholarly. I will demonstrate this point with a short exercise on the Christian church fathers.

"As regards the individual nature, woman is defective and misbegotten, for the active power of the male seed tends to the production of a perfect likeness in the masculine sex while the production of a woman comes from a defect in the active power."- Thomas Aquinas

"Women are vessels of excrement"- St. Augustine

"The sentence of God on this sex of yours lives in this age, the guilt must of necessity live too. You are the devil's gateway. You are the unsealer of that forbidden tree, you are the first deserter of the divine law. You destroyed so easily God's image, man on account of your desert- that is death, even the son of God had to die."- Tertullian

As you can see, the wisdom of the Christian fathers did not extend toward modern feminism and equality. By this exercise I DO NOT ATTEMPT TO CONDEMN CHRISTIANITY ITSELF, but rather these obviously misogynistic and perhaps sexually frustrated "holy" men who made mistakes in their interpretation of Christ's teachings and ran away with their impression of the Old Testament. I will keep my concerns about the bible's treatment of

women to myself so as not to "deflect" to Christianity :o) I will say that the Qur'an blames both Adam and Eve equally for their equal sin and punishes them BOTH FOR TRANSGRESSING THE LIMITS SET DOWN BY ALLAH, not for being one gender or another.

Now I would like to address another subject the Qur'anic verses brought forth by the gentlemen as well as the ahadith. Going through Islamic texts and taking what you find unpalatable, or simply looking at so-called Islamic societies and making your judgment based on that alone is unscholarly. When investigating any body of knowledge, you may not pick and choose and then present your case convincingly. In order to fully understand hadith and verses from the Qur'an you not only have to read the Tafseer but you also have to think about the context and validity of the hadith you are citing. There is an entire system of rating hadith, and many that people claim are the most authentic have been found to be inaccurate, or with only one narrator, etc. So taking some hadith out which "appear" to denigrate women and ignoring the countless hadith in which the Prophet SAW defends and enforces the rights of women is petty, and infantile. That being said I will only address the verses cited which are the most important.

I will begin with the first verse, which I might add is a little typical of Islamic adversaries. Suraah 4:34 the so-called "wife beating verse". It might be wise for those who criticize the Qur'an to investigate the possibility of mistranslation when reading it. So many times have I heard the claim that the Qur'an advocates beating one's wife, and so have I believed in the past when I was not a Muslim and was highly critical of what I saw in the news media's version of the Islamic world. The word "beat" as it is used in this context is the mistranslation of the Arabic word "daraba" which in the Qur'an alone is used in six different ways, Arabic being a much more faceted language than English, other verses in which this word is used are , 47:27, 18:11, 43:5, 14:24, and 2:273. In the context of this particular verse the word daraba, which some translators simply list as beat in their texts is more accurately translated as a symbolic gesture of a "light tap, leaving no mark", or as "leave/separate", not bash her head around until she sees your point of view. Here I would like to clarify the fact that the woman in question would not be some subservient, simpering slave girl, but a disrespectful, irresponsible, and unreasonable life mate who has entered into the agreement of marriage and is not fulfilling her end of the agreement(don't think the west doesn't have its own agreements about marriage!)

Since brother El-Mallah has answered many of your claims already I will only address a few more that are dear to my heart:

1. Let me clarify that in Islam prayer (salat) is considered worship and (dua) is a more informal supplication. It is said that if anyone supplicates to Allah he will answer their prayer. However, in other faiths women cannot perform the parallel degree (to salat) of worship by themselves, without a male emissary, primarily in the Orthodox and Catholic churches where only priests can lead rituals like liturgy, mass, or the sacrament. Women are not allowed to become priests because they do not represent the "image of Christ", any woman who is menstruating cannot cross the altar without desecrating it.

This is not the case Islam where a woman can become a scholar or a Sharia judge, since there is no clergy in Islam. In a mesjid or Mosque, the wife of the Prophet (PBUH) Aisha, may Allah be pleased with her narrated a hadith in which she used to sit right next to the Prophet while he prayed in the mosque while she was having her menses. Women not having to pray during their menses is a blessing from Allah and a medical precaution. I know this to be the case because I am a female, which you Mr. Sina, are not (and you probably thank God for that right?)

Coincidentally some Buddhist nuns pray a Buddhist prayer for a man's body in their next life. Buddhist nuns of twenty years always eat after a man who has been a monk for one day, I AM NOT DEFLECTING, I am stating the difference between a woman's body being accursed and being treated as having special needs.

2. It would appear that Mr. Sina has been to the afterlife and has seen how women are living there! (StakfirAllah).How does anyone know that women are treated unequally after death since it says in the Qur'an that anyone who receives the reward of paradise will have whatever they wish therein! We are not just talking about what our little human brains can think up. Often in the holy Qur'an the masculine verb form is used (because of linguistics, not gender preference)and in most cases it can apply to any believer, male or female, this is one such usage. You can never know, nor can any human being comprehend or explain the unseen, Allah will reward his slaves both male and female for what they earned in this life. There are also hadith which support a woman's right to sexual satisfaction in this life. The Prophet is reported as having said: "approach your wives with foreplay, please your wife (to orgasm) several times before you please yourself." There is a saying that the child conceived will look like whoever orgasms first (implying that women in Islam orgasm, check the western stats on that one). Marital relations are considered an act of worship.

P.S. the seventy two virgins comes from a hadith that is often considered less than reputable by some and many consider the number 72 to be an _expression rather than a literal number. The burqa is a ridiculous concept where a woman's face is covered, WHICH IS NOT REQUIRED. Women may not veil their faces on the Hajj (pilgrimage).The Prophet (PBUH) never hit any woman, and we are required to follow his sunnah (tradition). Also if Muslim men's egos were so big, why would they let women fight with them, even sometimes show them up in battle? You might try reading Aisha Bewley's book, Islam: the Empowering of Women, where she cites European colonialism as a major cause for the limiting of a woman's place in past and contemporary "Islamic" societies. And as for the Taliban, they just wouldn't listen to a weak woman like me, sorry!

Sina: It is good that Mr. Mallah sees equality in verse 33:35. Unfortunately most Muslims do not see what he sees and as the result women in Islamic countries are not treated as equals. Mr. Mallah may think this is because Muslims do not practice the true Islam, but maybe it has to do with the fact that either his understanding of the Qur'an is inaccurate or

the Qur’an is not clear enough and the majority of Muslims and I can’t read any equality in that verse.

The verse 3:135 stresses the fact that everyone will be remunerated but does not say they will be remunerated equally. If the owner of a factory tells his employees that after the sale of the product he will pay everyone it does not mean he is going to pay everyone equally. In the same way he may want to emphasize the interdependence of everyone involved and say you are of one another. This does not imply that the managers and the janitors are equal. The same argument can be made about the other verses Mr. Mallah quoted.

Mr. Mallah complains why Mr. Spencer and I did not mention the verses and hadiths that praise women. Yes indeed there are some verses and hadiths that praise women but we are talking about rights. Praising women does not imply they have equal rights. I could have lots of praises for my dog; this does not imply I consider him equal to humans.

Furthermore there are other verses and hadiths that denigrate women. For example verse 30:21 says “He created for you, of yourselves, spouses, that you may repose in them"

The Arabic text makes it clear that “for you” is masculine and “them” is in feminine.

What this verse is conveying is that women are created FOR men and are for their enjoyment.

Razi in At-Tafsir al-Kabir, commenting on this verse wrote:

"His saying 'created for you' is a proof that women **were created like animals and plants** and other useful things, just as the Most High has said 'He created for you what is on earth' and that necessitates the woman not to be created for worship and carrying the Divine commands.”

Hadi Sabzevari, an eminent Muslim scholar, in his commentary on another grand Muslim thinker, Sadr al-Mote'alihin wrote:

That Sadr ad-Deen Shirazi **classifies women as animals** is a delicate allusion to the fact that women, due to the deficiency in their intelligence and understanding of intricacies, and due to their fondness of the adornments of the world, are truly and justly among the mute animals [al-haywanti al-sa^mita]. They have the nature of beasts [ad-dawwa^b], but they have been given the disguise of human beings so that men would not be loath to talk to them and be compelled to have sexual intercourse with them. That is why our immaculate Law [shar'ina al-mutahhar] takes men's side and gives them superiority in most matters, including divorce, "nushuz," etc.

Ms. Roach says we won’t understand the Qur’an unless we do not read the Tafsir. She is right. But Tafsirs often incriminate Muhammad even more, unless they are written by modern apologists and for the consumption of the westerners.

Mr. Mallah thinks just because Muhammad names men and women together in one sentence then they mush be equal. But we have hadiths where Muhammad names asses, women and dogs in one sentence. Muslim 4,1232 says a man's "**prayer would be cut off by (passing of an) ass, woman, and black Dog**".

Mr. Mallah says we failed to mention that in Islam the husband is responsible to provide for the family and the wife is not required to contribute with a penny. Is that a good thing? This is precisely the source of inequality and tension between husband and wife. They are not seen as partners but rather as employer and employee. She is to provide a service for him, (give birth to HIS children, satisfy his sexual needs, take care of HIS property, etc) and in exchange he is required to maintain her. Is there any difference between this dynamism and that of a master and his slave?

The verse 2:228 does not just imply but it is explicit that men are superior to women. It says very clearly: "but men have a degree (of advantage) over them...". Can you be more explicit than that?

If we are mistaken can our Muslim friends tell us which Islamic country has understood this equality that they talk about and is applying it? How is it possible that all the Muslims are so confused about what the Qur'an says that in 1400 years they have not been implement the true Islam? Didn't Muhammad claim that the Qur'an is a "clear book" (5:15) "easy to understand" (44:58 , 54:22 , 54:32, 54:40) "explained in detail" (6:114), "conveyed clearly", (5:16, 10:15) and with "no doubt" in it (2:1)?

Mr. Mallah quoted several verses where women are mentioned but none of them suggest that women are equal in rights to men. Telling men to treat their wives with kindness does not imply equality. One could say, be kind to animals. This does not mean you and animals have the same right.

The very fact that Mr. Mallah quotes these totally unrelated verses shows there are no verses in the Qur'an that speak of equality. On the other hand there are many verses that show women are inferior to men.

Mr. Mallah claims the verse 4:11-12 that says women inherit half of their male siblings does not mean that a sister is worth half of her brother. We are not talking about "worth". We are talking about rights. Value is an abstract thing. How much you value me is irrelevant to me. But I expect you to respect my rights and treat me equally. Values are subjective, rights are tangible and objective. In Islam women are not treated equally. They do not have the same rights that men have.

Now since we started talking about "worth" I think it is worth mentioning that in Saudi Arabia if a person has been killed or caused to die by another, the latter has to pay blood money or compensation, as follows:

100,000 riyals if the victim is a Muslim man

50,000 riyals if a Muslim woman

50,000 riyals if a Christian man

25,000 riyals if a Christian woman

6,666 riyals if a Hindu man

3,333 riyals if a Hindu woman

Source: The Wall Street Journal, April 9, 2002

So as you see people's worth are not the same in Islam. It depends on their gender and their religion.

Mr. Mallah also boasts that in Islam the husband is responsible to maintain his wife even if the wife is wealthier than him and has other sources of income. Is that justice? Does that help to solidify love and unity between the husband and wife? How would you feel if suddenly your wife receives a huge inheritance and becomes a multi millionaire but does not share a penny from her wealth with you and at the same time demands you to maintain her with your meager salary? Can such marriage survive?

All of this emphasizes the fact that the marital relationship in Islam is akin to the relationship of an employer with his employee. A good marriage is one where husband and wife are equal partners in every sense. That is not what happens in Islam. The wife enters in the husband's household as an employee and can be fired at anytime. All he has to do is to utter "I divorce thee" and the marriage is over. And woe if he utters this three times out of rage or respite, because then he will not be able to re-marry her unless she marries someone else, consummate the marriage with that new husband, divorces him and then she can remarry her original husband.

Mr. Mallah says verse 33:50 has nothing to do with rape. Actually it has. If you take the verse 4:24 where Muhammad says: "Also (prohibited are) women already married, **except those whom your right hands possess**..." it becomes clear that a Muslim is allowed to have intercourse with his right hand possessions (slaves, women captured in war) even if these right hand possessions are already married. If you still doubt the meaning of this verse, there is a hadith that can make this clear. Bukhari 7,62,137 talks about Muslim warriors who used to have sex with woman captured in war. But because they did not want to impregnate them and wanted to return them for ransom after raping them, they went to Muhammad asking about coitus interruptus (spilling the sperm on the ground). The prophet did not prohibit the raping of the women but rather said do not do coitus interruptus because if God has destined for a soul to be born it would be born anyway. See also Bukhari 8.77.6

Maybe I should remind our friends that Rayhana and Safiayah were Jewish women (both in their teens) who were captured by Muhammad and the prophet slept with them in the same day that he murdered their fathers, brothers, husbands and other relatives. Although Safiayh after losing every person in her family, felt she had no choice but to marry Muhammad,

Rayhana refused to marry the murderer of her tribe (Bani Quriaza) and remained in his household as a sex slave until he died. Another victim of Muhammad was Juwariyah belonging to another Jewish tribe.

In explaining the verse 4:34 Mr. Mallah says the beating must be light, should not leave any marks and must be with "toothbrush". This is not clear from the verse and certainly millions of battered Muslim women have not benefited by this addendum. Again it boils down to the question, why is the Qur'an not clear on these crucial matters? Also the way Mr. Mallah explains this verse sounds more like foreplay. Beating with a toothbrush? Is that a joke? Why beat at all? Even if it is symbolic, and it is only intended to establish the dominance of man over woman, the question is why? Why should men dominate women even symbolically? However, millions of battered Muslim women can testify that there is nothing symbolic in this beating. They are often beaten so much that their bones are crushed. I personally recall women coming to our house showing their bruises to my mother and crying.

Mr. Mallah says Islam allows the wife to divorce her husband through what is known as "khole".

What is khole? Khole is when women agree to forgo alimony and to repay their husbands any dowry in exchange of having the right to divorce. It is supported by this hadith: abudawud12.2220 . Is that fair?

This is a great tool in the hand of a man who wants to get rid of his wife and not pay her alimony and get back the dowry. All he has to do is to make her life miserable until she takes her freedom and forgoes her rights. This happens everyday where Sharia is practiced.

I do not see any justice in this. Women in Islamic countries are often not allowed to work so they do not have money. They receive half of the inheritance of their brothers so fanatically they are in disadvantage. Divorce means assured poverty and extreme hardship. Often death is preferable and the rate of suicide among women is very high (especially in Iran).

Mr. Mallah says: "In Islam, if the husband beats a wife without respecting the limits set down by the Quran and Hadith, then she can take him to court and, if ruled in her favor, she can be given the right to apply the law of retaliation and beat the husband as he beat her."

I am sure Mr. Mallah is trying to use some humor here. I never heard of a woman beating her husband by court order. But this gives us an idea of the concept of marriage in Islam. Imagine children raised in such families. No wonder the majority of Muslims have such high egos and such low self-esteems and they burst to violence at a drop of a hat. They come from dysfunctional families.

Mr. Mallah says "In Islam victims of rape are not punished in anyway. They are victims..!"

Is that true? In Islam the testimony of one woman is not valid. So a woman who is raped and can't produce a witness (generally rapists do not rape in public so the likelihood of finding a

witness is very slim) cannot accuse her assailant. However if she becomes pregnant there is a clear proof that she has had sex out of wedlock and she can be accused of adultery and stoned to death. This is not hypothetical. It happens all the time. We all remember the case of Amina Lawal, the Nigerian woman who was sentenced to stoning and was released after Amnesty International and the whole world was mobilized. But there are many more cases. (See also this)

The question is why people's sex life should be the concern of the society and government. Why two consenting adults should be lashed for sleeping together? Why adulterers should be stoned to death? If your wife commits adultery just divorce her. Why resort to such barbaric and primitive practice? This savagery should not be allowed in our modern world. Adultery is morally wrong and it is something between an individual and his or her creator and spouse. The state has no right to intervene in people's personal lives. Last month a 14 year old boy was flogged to death for eating during the month of Ramadan. This is insane. If a person wants to fast or not should be his personal choice. But beating a person is a crime. Islamic code of law is criminal. Imposing religions morality is criminal. It is amazing that Muhammad saw nothing wrong in raping women captured in war but prescribed stoning the adulterers.

It is reported that Muhammad said: "I was about to order for collecting firewood and then order someone to pronounce the Adhan for the prayer and then order someone to lead the people in prayer and then I would go from behind and burn the houses of men who did not present themselves for the (compulsory congregational) prayer." Bukhari 9.89.330 Muhammad was a controlling man. He could not tolerate anyone not obeying him.

Ms. Roach tries to tackle this problem by flaunting her own example as a liberated Muslim woman. She is by no means a typical Muslim woman. She lives in America (or another western country, I presume) and she is protected by the American laws. If her husband raises his hand on her, she can afford to fight back or lock him up in jail. Her husband knows it too and he behaves himself. I have come to know many ex-Muslim women who told me that their husbands were "charming and cute" until they lived in the West but as soon as they moved to their Islamic countries they changed and beatings started. The story "Not Without My Daughter" by Betty Mahmoodi is a true story and it has happened to countless western women who married to Muslim men.

Ms. Roach says: "If I were beaten by anybody, husband or no, you can bet your life I would fight back!"

Dear Ms. Roach, be grateful you do not live in an Islamic country. It is this Kafirdom that you despise that empowers you to say such things. Please know that Muslim women who endure abuse are no less intelligent than you. They however, do not have your luxury to be protected by the infidel's laws. They live in Islamic countries where they have no rights.

A couple of months ago we heard of the tragic story about an Iranian woman who had gone to the court asking the judge to tell her husband to beat her only once a week and not every

day. All she wanted was to live and she was willing to be beaten once a week for that privilege which kafir women take for granted. She knew if her husband divorced her, she had nowhere to go except to end up as beggar in the street. This reminded all of us of the painful reality of the Muslim women trapped in Islamic countries. Ms. Roach has no understanding of, or is completely and heartlessly indifferent to, how a typical Muslim woman lives and what she has to endure.

Ms. Roach says “There is nothing anywhere in any of the texts that tells women to take beatings from anyone,” So what does she think of Q 4:34? This denial is mind boggling. Even more mind boggling is when she says: “There is no real Islamic society today on the national level, there is no real and complete implementation of Sharia law.” That is an amazing statement. After 1400 years 1.2 billion Muslims have not managed to implement the Sharia law in any of the 57 Islamic countries. Isn't it reasonable to conclude that such a utopian Islamic paradise exists nowhere except in Ms. Roach’s fantasies?

No dear Ms. Roach, I do not condemn Islam because of "some people’s backward interpretation of it". I condemn Islam for what Muhammad did and said. I condemn Islam because he assassinated those who criticized him including a 120 year old man and a poetess, mother of five small children. I condemn him for raiding civilians without any warning for killing unarmed men who had gone after their daily business and for enslaving their women and children, for selling humans and for looting innocent people. I condemn Muhammad for traitorously beheading 750 innocent Jews of Bani Quraiza after they surrendered to him without a fight. I condemn him for torturing and blinding people with red hot bars of iron to force them to reveal where they had hidden their treasures and then after killing them he showed their beheaded corpses to their wives and took one of them (Safiyah) to the tent and slept with her on the same day. I condemn him for introducing religious intolerance in a very tolerant Arabian society and for inaugurating religious wars and killings that has lasted up to this day and is still taking its tolls.

Dear Ms. Roach. I know it is hard for you to accept that Muhammad actually meant beat when he said beat your wife. But you must either accept Islam as is or reject it. Daraba does not mean “light tap”. It means beat. It does not mean play music like beating a drum, it says beat your wife. You can deny this as much a you like and hide your head deep in the sands but you can't change the truth. Beating is supported by hadith too. Abu Dawood 11. 2142: “The Prophet said: A man will not be asked as to why he beat his wife.”

Another cute story of wife beating can be found in this hadith: muwatta30.2.13 In this hadith a woman tries to trick her husband so he stop sleeping with their maid. But Umar tells him to beat his wife and to go to his slave-girl.

Another cuter story is when Muhammad raises his hand to beat a woman who rejects his advances. Bukhari 7.63.182

Ms. Roach boasts that she would fight back anyone who beats her but she does not mind if other Muslim women are beaten, provided they are “disrespectful” and “irresponsible”.

Who can determine if someone is disrespectful and irresponsible? Who should be the judge? The husband! Who should apply the punishment? Also the husband! And of course the husband is also the plaintiff. Doesn’t this seem a little unjust? How this system can guarantee that women will not be beaten wantonly?

Moreover, does beating really work? Is it right to treat "disrespectful" women like animals? In this day and age you can’t even beat an animal but Muslims insist the there is nothing wrong in beating the wife. Isn’t divorce better than violence?

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